
2018 CalChess Elections of the Board of Directors

Candidates Statements

The following members have submitted their candidacy to run for the position of Board of Directors for CalChess in the 2018 election:

Kiki Chen
George Jeffers
Thomas Langland (incumbent)
Joe Lonsdale (incumbent)
Stephen Shaughnessy (incumbent)
Dr. Judit Sztaray (incumbent)
Ashik Uzzaman
Hui Wang

Please read their candidate statements below:

Kiki Chen

Hi, I am Kiki Chen, founder of King's Land Chess. Our chess academy was found in 2012 in Southern California. In January of 2017, we relocated to San Ramon. We focus on improving youth chess education by providing professional chess training classes and intensive training camps. We aim to develop successful chess kids who excel not only on the game, but in life.

After we relocated to Tri-Valley, we found chess kids in our area can performance better on their chess study. Tri-valley's average chess level is a little behind, compare to other bay area places, like south bay. Our first mission is to provide more professional chess training opportunities for kids in tri-valley and improve their chess skills. We have seen big potentials on our students. By offering different levels professional chess classes and intensive chess camps, we are confident that in one to two years, we will see more and stronger chess kids in tri-valley area.

As a female chess coach, I also commit on improve girls' chess education. Many people think girls won't performance as good as boys on chess, or girls don't like chess, which is not true. Take a look GM Hou Yifan, and Polgar sisters. Girls sometimes just play chess for different reasons than boys. And when girls are outnumbered by boys at tournaments, it is easy for them to feel isolated. As a woman chess coach, it is a good chance for me to promote girls chess, because when I stand in front of them, myself is the example and encourage for our girl players. If we want more girls to play chess at the highest levels, we have to bring more girls into the game at an earlier age. The earlier we introduce girls to chess, the greater our chance to see more girls continuing to compete.

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We are also committed to promote chess cultural exchange and build the bridge between American and Chinese youth chess players. In last four years, we held 3 times Chess Cultural Exchange programs. Through the program, chess kids from Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong and Hong Kong visit many chess clubs in California, include Bay area chess, Berkeley Chess School, Norcal House of Chess, Beyond Chess and CYCL. Chess life Magazine wrote a long story about our chess cultural exchange named "Living the dream" and post it in December 2015 edition on First moves page. Our mission is to build the friendship and understanding between players from China and US, and to develop more international perspective and communication capacity for our youth players.

I love chess, I want more kids have the opportunities to learn chess. Chess will bring much more than a game to their life. Work with CalChess, we will bring up more ideas about how to improve our chess education. We will create more chess classes, chess activities and tournaments in Tri-valley. Promote girls chess, create more events especially for girls. And develop more chess cultural programs for chess kids in bay area and china. Chess is not just a game, but more a life, Chess for world, wisdom for life.

George Jeffers

CANDIDATE STATEMENT FOR CALCHESS BOARD OF DIRECTORS – GEORGE JEFFERS,
8/21/18

I first played tournament chess nearly 40 years ago in High School. After a long break from chess during Graduate School and career I've started playing again back in 2010. Thus, my perspective is mainly as an adult player. Seeing how I benefited from chess during my education and currently as a working professional I would like to use that experience to benefit the overall chess community. Chess can be played from youth to old age and can offer both tangible benefits as well as pride, a sense of accomplishment, fulfillment, etc... Hopefully we can continue to spread the positive results of this game we enjoy.

While I do not have kids my interests are split between considerations of adult players as well as continuing the strong scholastic chess program already in place locally. My belief is that to continue the games popularity and spread the benefits of playing chess we certainly need a strong scholastic chess scene for the players of the future, but also must maintain the interest amongst adult players.

I am not affiliated with a chess program but would like to become more involved within the chess community. Over the board I play mainly in the South Bay and regularly attend The Kolty Chess Club in Campbell.

As a member of the CalChess Board I would have the chance to make contributions and do my best to ensure fair, unbiased access to tournaments and local resources. While I lack previous organizational experience in the chess world I am confident my dedication, skills at problem solving, and commitment to fairness would enable success as a member of the CalChess Board.

George Jeffers
georgejeffers2112 at gmail.com

Tom Langland (incumbent)

As a NATIONAL TD, FIDE International Arbiter and International Organizer, Tom is one of only 9 in the nation to hold all three titles. He has directed hundreds of USCF tournaments, receiving the honor of National Tournament Director of the Year for 2016.

Tom volunteers his time to organize many tournaments in the Central Valley, reaching out to Title I schools, bringing chess to over a thousand underprivileged kids. Awarded the Volunteer of the Year at his children's school for his efforts, the prestigious County Golden Apple award and was recognized as the USCF Volunteer of the Month.

As President of CalChess, Tom's leadership has guided CalChess to the most thriving, productive and harmonious decade in its history. Tom was asked to step in as President following many tumultuous years, including lawsuits, raiding of the bank accounts, wasteful spending and divisive infighting, leading up to the resignation of the President and Treasurer.

His first goal was to complete the process of attaining non-profit (501c3) status, which had been stalled for several years. Finishing the operation in less than a year, Tom also recovered thousands of dollars from the State of California.

Later, Tom had to repossess the www.calchess.org domain name from a previous board member gone rogue, which CalChess had spent thousands of dollars to create. Months of work culminated with the safe recovery of our intellectual property. Concurrently, Tom volunteered to completely rewrite the entire CalChess.org website at no cost, which has since won the Best Affiliate Web Site in the whole USCF several times. Tom even added the ability to purchase CalChess memberships online, a feature that had been put off for too long. Tom sees a problem and solves it.

CalChess has risen to over 5500 USCF members allowing it to gain another USCF delegate, which is almost unheard of for an already large affiliate. We are currently the #3 state in the USCF! Our expansion is being noticed! Tom has played a substantial role in lobbying the USCF to bring many U.S. National Championship events to our growing area.

Tom continues to serve the USCF on the Tournament Director Certification Committee, responsible for the testing and resolution of complaints for all tournament directors, as well as the Competition Integrity (anti-cheating) Committee.

The most valuable service Tom provides is the critical position of Moderator of the USCF Forums. Only two selected members have this privilege and responsibility. Tom's experience and resourcefulness to work with people to resolve their differences is a skill that USCF recognizes and has been invaluable to CalChess. For years, Tom has facilitated our various local factions to continue towards a forward-looking vision.

You will have four votes. Save one for the candidate who has a proven record of dedication specifically to your CalChess, who will in turn make the most of your other votes. Support Tom in continuing to lead this association in working together in a civil manner, eradicating the terrible conflicts and chaos of years past.

Joe Lonsdale (incumbent)

Statement of Joe Lonsdale, Vice-president of Cal Chess. USCF ID 11364829 rating = 2,000

In 1989 I helped found the MSJE (Mission San Jose Elementary, Fremont) chess team. I started the team because my three sons attended MSJE. Chess was very good for my children. Each of them won the State Championship. This made them think (know) that they were smart and this has led to quite a bit of success in their lives. I continued running the MSJE Chess team after my children left the school because it is good for the children.

MSJE has been the most successful scholastic chess team in Northern CA and one of the most

MSJE has been the most successful scholastic chess team in Northern CA and one of the most successful elementary school chess teams in the country. Since 2009 we have won the National K-6 Championship five times (2009, 2013, 2015, 2016, & 2018 - tied for first in 2018). We have also won national championships in K-1, K-3, and K-5.

I do not mind people making money in the business of chess, however I strongly object to the high tournament entry fees that have become common in scholastic chess in Northern CA. I do not run the MSJE Chess Team or participate in scholastic chess activities to make money. I made all the money I will ever need working in high tech sales and marketing. I am presently retired.

The Lonsdale family has been very generous in supporting youth chess. In 2014 we (mainly my very successful son, Joe Lonsdale Jr., but \$500 from me) gave over \$40,000 to N CA Chess programs, over \$30,000 of it to Cal Chess. I was hoping that this money would lead to lower tournament entry fees. This did not happen. Bay Area Chess continued to increase entry fees for the State meet despite the extra \$5,000/year that they obtained from this gift. I believe that this continued increase in entry fees for the state meet is to a large extent my fault as I was in a position (VP of Cal Chess) to insist on lower fees and to work to obtain competitive bids for the tournaments. I put no energy into this. I foolishly assumed that it would happen on its own.

I hope to arrange further donations to Cal Chess and to see that the dollars are used to lower entry fees and not just increase the cash flow of the tournament organizer.

I am a member of the USCF scholastic council. This is an elected position. It is a five-member council that advises the USCF executive board on scholastic policy. In a recent discussion I was made aware how high our State meet fees actually are. One member objected to a \$50 entry fee for a seven-round National tournament over three days. We (Cal Chess/Bay Area Chess) are presently charging this (\$50) for a five-round tournament in one day. We are charging \$67 for a six-round tournament over two days.

I believe that the best way to control the fees for tournaments is to have various groups compete. Bids submitted to the Cal Chess board generally include the entry fees to be charged for the tournament as well as the prize money to be awarded. I hope to do a much better job at encouraging others to bid for tournaments and to offer lower entry fees.

Thoughts on the composition of the board: Elizabeth Shaughnessy is a former president of Cal Chess and a successful tournament organizer. She is also a chess player. Current rating = 1505. Not a senior master, but this is more impressive than the 583 rating of Judit Sztaray. I would love to have Elizabeth on the Cal Chess board. However, she decided that since her son, Stephen Shaughnessy, would be taking over Berkeley Chess School he should serve on the board of Cal Chess. She felt that there was no need to have two Berkeley Chess School people on the board. I fully agree that there is no need for two members of the same organization to serve on the Cal Chess Board, particularly if the organization actually runs tournaments. Abel (presently a board member) works for Bay Area Chess as does Judit. It does not make sense for both of them to be on the board at the same time.

Joe Lonsdale Sr. 8/2018

Chess/CalChess

CalChessStatement.8.18

Stephen Shaughnessy (incumbent)

Dear fellow CalChess Members,

My name is Stephen Shaughnessy, and I am running for re-election to the CalChess Board of Director, on which I've served since 2010.

Quick highlights:

Chess player and chess teacher,

Tournament organizer,

Camp organizer,

Coordinator of Berkeley Bishops and Queens chess team,

Taught Sam Shankland when he was starting!

I have played chess since being taught by my mother Elizabeth at the age of five. The next year she started a chess class at my school, and I became the school champion. I continued playing throughout elementary school, and became the Under 12 State Champion in 1985, as well as finishing 5th in the country that year. With those successes, I began to play at the Berkeley Chess Club, where I met chess legends like Richard Shoreman and Alan Glasscoe. Richard would bring a chess computer, the first of its kind! He also taught the chess classes at Berkeley High, which I attended. During high school, I began to work as an assistant chess teacher at the summer camps my mother was running, and learned from some great instructors. Soon I was teaching the beginners classes at these chess camps.

After college, and trying several jobs, I decided that teaching chess was my passion, and I dived into teaching full time. The Berkeley Chess School (BCS) raises funds to go into Title 1 schools (meaning most students qualify for free lunch), and I was one of the instructors to teach in classrooms during the day in Oakland and Richmond. I also taught after school classes all around the Bay Area, as well as some evening classes. The best BCS evening class was in Berkeley on Fridays. I took over from FIDE Master Andy Lee and built the enrollment from one class up to eight classes, and then started a similar Friday Evening program in Walnut Creek and now in San Ramon. I also run a Tuesday Evening Chess Class in Piedmont. I believe the secret to these successes is making chess instruction fun. After all, it is a game!

During the summers I am in charge of organizing our Summer Camps, especially our full-day camp in Berkeley. I teach at this one and many other regional camps, and have recently began another full day camp in Dublin.

I also organize and am a coach for the two traveling teams that BCS runs: The Berkeley Bishops and our Queens Team. We hold weekly practices, compete at the biggest tournaments, and travel to compete against other chess programs locally and even internationally. This past year the Bishops played against teams from Mission San Jose and NorCal House of Chess.

In addition to teaching, I work (with other BCS staff) to organize chess tournaments, including lots of smaller tournaments throughout the East Bay, and lots of big tournaments as well. BCS started and hosts the Senior State Championship, the Women's State Championship, the Girls Age Level State Championship, and this year's CalChess State Championship. In coordination with USChess, we have held a Women's Western States Regional Championship at our newly acquired Chess Center in Berkeley. And we recently hosted a GM Norm tournament, with one IM Norm being earned and two GM Norms!

My work with teaching chess (personally to about 1000 students per year), organizing tournaments and summer camps, and with the CalChess Board of Directors and the USChess

Scholastic Council for the past decade and a half make me very attuned to what is working well in our chess community, as well as to what can be improved. Northern California has become a hot-bed of chess, but much more can be done to bring this great game to those that could benefit from its many important life-lessons. I believe that CalChess should begin to run its own tournaments again, instead of putting them out for bid. This would allow CalChess to keep the income that these tournaments generate, which it could then use to support chess instruction and players in Northern California. If CalChess could take this more ambitious approach, it could find corporate partners and expand the opportunities for people to learn chess, play in local tournaments, and assist our strongest players to participate in national and international tournaments.

Thank you for your deliberation in choosing four candidates in this year's CalChess election. I hope I will be one of them!

Best,
Stephen Shaughnessy

p.s. I was GM Sam Shankland's first chess instructor when he was in the fifth grade in Orinda!

Dr. Judit Sztaray (incumbent)

I am very passionate about chess, this chess community and it is my plan to continue to give back to this community via my energetic and dedicated work!

I stand for:

- First and foremost: Spreading the love of chess and making chess accessible for any and all in Northern California, as well as educating them about CalChess and its mission.
- Second: Clear communication, transparency in CalChess matters, and accountability of the board members.
- Third: Quality, professionalism, and excellent customer service in all CalChess events.

Over the past five years I have been working on making positive changes and delivering results in the following areas:

- I have started a free chess club in the heart of San Jose making Chess accessible for the low-income community.
- I have updated the CalChess website with the recent board minutes, as well as updated the club list and front page for easy access to the most important pieces of information.
- Developed clear guidelines for our representatives at the National Tournament of Champions, along with getting a \$300 stipend approved for our senior representative.
- I have secured 2x\$500 scholarships to help kids from low-income families to attend the state championship.
- I have been actively using the CalChess Facebook page as a way to inform our players about upcoming events and recent results.
- I have started clear and open communication about CalChess elections via email blasts, giving everyone a fair and equal opportunity to run for office.

While I am proud of these results, there is even more that can and should be done in order for CalChess to be an active organization. I will reach out to the local and non-Bay Area chess communities, secure corporate sponsorships to provide scholarships, organize and represent

CalChess at community events, increase the participation of adults in CalChess events, and re-launch the California Chess Journal amongst many other projects. These undertakings will ensure CalChess reaches its full potential as an active organization that represents the needs and interests of our vibrant and thriving chess community.

Being a chess mom of three girls, an organizer of many chess events and restless volunteer for local and national chess organizations make me your best choice to deliver these plans. I ask for your support and your vote for CalChess Board member!

Dr. Judit Sztaray
8/24/18

Ashik Uzzaman

I have been living in bay area for thirteen years and work as a software engineer. I am also a chess parent and a USCF Candidate Master. If elected as a board member for Calchess, I will work along with other members to improve the social network presence of Calchess. This will include timely communication of calchess activities via e-newsletter, facebook page and twitter feed for Calchess. I will also work to attract Corporate Sponsorship from various Sillicon Valley software companies.

Regards,

Ashik Uzzaman

[My Chess Blog: Dragon Bishop](#)

Hui Wang

Hui Wang did not submit a candidate statement.

As a reminder:

Meeting Location: Crowne Plaza Silicon Valley N- Union City, 32083 Alvarado-Niles Rd, Union City, CA 94587, USA

Meeting Date & Time: September 2, Sunday 3:30pm

Meeting room: Bay room

CalChess bylaws have all the details regarding voting eligibility, so please study them here:

http://www.calchess.org/governance/calchess_bylaws.pdf



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